

*Washington, DC -- Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today released the following statement after voting in favor of a continuing resolution to fund the government through November 18. The continuing resolution will allow the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to meet short-term obligations. Hinchey, who has lead the effort in the house for a bigger disaster relief package, said he will continue pushing additional legislation to provide disaster relief for farmers and provide all of the funding necessary for FEMA to meet its long-term disaster recovery obligations.*

"Today I voted for a bipartisan deal to provide the funding necessary for the government to continue operating until November 18. This compromise bill will allow the Federal Emergency Management Agency to meet its short-term obligations, ensuring that families affected by Tropical Storm Lee and Hurricane Irene will receive the relief they need in the coming weeks.

"This legislation, however, provides only a down payment. Additional legislation will be needed to prevent another FEMA funding crisis, provide additional funding for several Department of Agriculture emergency relief programs, and address emergency relief shortfalls at other agencies. I had hoped we could address these concerns through the bipartisan legislation that passed the Senate two weeks ago, and I lead 76 other U.S. House members in calling for an up or down vote in the House. Unfortunately, the Speaker and House Majority leader have so far failed to bring this bill to the House floor.

"The manner in which Washington has dealt with this issue has been disgraceful. It used to be that we avoided playing politics when it came to helping our neighbors recover from natural disasters. Eight times during the Bush Administration, we did just that. The new tone in Washington is putting politics before people in the worst way conceivable. When a natural disaster destroys your home, your small business or your farm, the last thing you need is a show of political brinksmanship in Washington. Sadly, that's exactly what the American people got.

"I'm going to continue working to set aside the politics and provide all of the funding necessary to help the New Yorkers I represent recover from Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. I hope that in the coming weeks we can reach a bipartisan deal to ensure that all Americans affected by natural disasters receive the relief they deserve over the long run."